

FROSTBURG STATE UNIVERSITY
2019 Institutional Performance Accountability Report
September 2019

MISSION

Frostburg State University is a student-centered teaching and learning institution featuring experiential opportunities. The University offers students a distinctive and distinguished baccalaureate education along with a select set of applied master's and doctoral programs. Frostburg serves regional and statewide economic and workforce development; promotes cultural enrichment, civic responsibility, and sustainability; and prepares future leaders to meet the challenges of a complex and changing global society.

INSTITUTIONAL ASSESSMENT

Goal 1: Address State-wide and regional workforce needs by preparing a changing student population for an era of complexity and globalization.

Frostburg prides itself on providing student engagement opportunities that both address community needs as well as promote the university's successes, strengths, and assets at state and regional levels (**MSP Strategy 8**). Various initiatives and programs in STEM disciplines, teacher education, and regional engagement activities serve as a means to achieve this goal and reinforce statewide strategies.

STEM Initiatives and Programs

Although the number of FSU undergraduates enrolled in STEM programs decreased by 5.6% over the reporting period (from 804 in 2018 to 759 in 2019), FSU continues to meet its MFR-established goal for the number of STEM-program graduates (169 in 2019).

Over the reporting period, the R.N. completion program experienced a 3.2% growth in enrollment (from 468 students in 2018 to 483 in 2019) as well as an 8.8% increase in the number of nursing program graduates (from 147 in 2018 to 160 in 2019 - **MFR Objective 1.3**). Additionally, enrollment in the Master of Science in Nursing program continues to grow significantly (by 52.2% from 2018 to 2019), and the Department of Nursing is currently exploring the feasibility of establishing post-master's certificates in the Leadership/Management and Education concentrations as well as a doctoral degree or collaborative doctoral degree with other USM institutions.

Frostburg's Master of Medical Science in Physician Assistant Studies program successfully received accreditation-provisional status from its accrediting agency (ARC-PA) in May 2019 (see Goal 3 below). As a result of this provisional accreditation, the University enrolled an initial cohort of 25 students into the program in the summer of 2019 (**MSP Strategies 4 and 6**).

Education

Frostburg State University continues to reach out regionally in the expansion of new and existing academic programs designed to meet the educational needs of working professionals in Maryland (**MSP Strategy 1**). For 2019, 265 students enrolled in undergraduate teacher education and Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT) post-baccalaureate programs. While enrollments in these programs have declined from 2018, the number of candidates who successfully completed their teacher training over the reporting period (**MFR Objective 1.2**) has increased from 96 in 2018 to 105 in 2019. Additionally, the pass rates for undergraduate and MAT post-baccalaureate students on the PRAXIS II has remained strong at 98% in 2019.

In the summer of 2019, the University enrolled an initial cohort of students into its new 18-credit hour Post-Master's Certificate in Educational Leadership. This advanced certificate is designed for certified teachers who hold a Master's degree from a fully-accredited institution of higher education. Its purpose is to prepare students for entry-level positions in educational leadership by equipping them with the techniques, skills, and concepts appropriate to the field.

In response to the need for graduates in the allied health professions and to help reduce students' time to degree, Frostburg began offering a combined, five-year Bachelor of Science in Exercise and Sport Science/Master of Science in Athletic Training. In May 2019, MHEC granted approval for FSU to offer the program, which is the only one of its kind in the state of Maryland. Frostburg discontinued its bachelor's degree in athletic training and began the combined program in the fall of 2019. The University also created a two-year master's program for students who already have a related undergraduate degree to transition to the new Commission on Accreditation of Athletic Training Education (CAATE) standards.

In October 2018, Garrett College and Frostburg State University signed a Memorandum of Understanding establishing the foundation for a collaborative Bachelor of Science degree program in Adventure Sports Management. The agreement also provides students with a clear pathway from an associate degree to a baccalaureate degree, utilizing the resources of both institutions.

Regional Engagement

In addition to strategic delivery of existing programs that engage external communities with the University, Frostburg is beginning to create new opportunities for its resources and intellectual capital to benefit the region and better promote campus facilities that help spark innovation. As part of these efforts, the university transformed the Sustainable Energy Research Facility (SERF) into the new Center for Applied Research and Innovation (CARI). In March of 2019, a Call for Proposals was issued to the campus to seek specific innovation projects and programs that can be jump-started by CARI. While proposed projects and programs can be driven by individual faculty, staff, or students, FSU is also encouraging innovations that are in cooperation or partnership across disciplinary and organizational lines and include participation with business, industry, or the larger community to answer questions faced in the region. In addition to space in

CARI, the university is also working with the selected projects to help secure funding, equipment, and other needs.

Goal 2: Promote an institutional image of academic distinction and ensure stable institutional enrollment through admission of students prepared to succeed in college and persist to graduation.

Frostburg State University supports student success through its comprehensive academic and career services, which are focused on the needs of its students. Over the reporting period, the university continued to exceed its benchmarked goal for the percentage of African-American and minority undergraduates enrolled. These performance measures remained stable in 2019, at 31.2% of the total undergraduate population for African Americans (**MFR Objective 2.2**) and 42.5% for minorities (**MFR Objective 2.3**).

Frostburg's second-year retention rate for undergraduates rose from 73.7% in 2018 to 76.7% in 2019 (**MFR Objective 2.1**). The second-year retention rate for African-American students also increased (from 71.3% in 2018 to 76.4% in 2019, **MFR Objective 2.4**), as did the rate for all minorities (from 69.4% to 73.9%, **MFR Objective 2.6**). While the six-year graduation rate of undergraduates gained slightly (from 57.3% for 2018 to 58.1% for 2019, **MFR Objective 2.1**), there were declines in both the six-year graduation rates for African-Americans (from 59.2% to 55.6%, **MFR Objective 2.5**) and for all minorities (from 56.2% to 55.7%, **MFR Objective 2.7**) over the same time period. For all three of the graduation rates referenced above, it is important to note that these performance measures include students who started at Frostburg, but were successfully able to transfer and graduate from another public four-year institution in Maryland.

Recent Hires

In October 2018, Frostburg State University established a new position of Vice President for Enrollment Management, whose charge is to consolidate important support services for both prospective and enrolled students with the goal of making more intentional and efficient the University's student support offerings. Bringing together Admissions, Financial Aid, the Office of the Registrar, Programs Advancing Student Success, the Center for Academic Advising and Retention (CAAR), and TRIO programs, this position also brings a student success focus to FSU's enrollment initiatives.

In August of 2019, Frostburg hired a Northeast Maryland Regional Admissions Counselor, whose duties include recruiting students to the engineering programs at AACC (Arundel Mills) and Cecil College, recruiting transfer students from the northeast portion of Maryland to the main FSU campus, and visiting high schools to recruit first-time students.

Also in the summer of 2019, Frostburg hired an Assistant Athletic Director for Student Development and Success, who is charged with monitoring and supporting student-athletes' academic performance and progress, overseeing the implementation of study-hall policies, serving as Frostburg's NCAA Student-Athlete Advisory Committee advisor, developing leadership and career preparation programs, and creating stronger student-athlete experiences.

Other Persistence Efforts

In the summer of 2019, a designated section of Intermediate Algebra was offered online for the first time to returning students, in addition to the section that has historically been offered to first-year students. The summer 2019 pass rate for returning students in the course was 87.5% (enrollment: 8 students), as opposed to 92.0% for first-year students (enrollment: 25 students). Summer pass rates continued to exceed that of regular term offerings of the course, allowing more students to progress to mathematics courses appropriate for their majors.

Also in the summer of 2019, Academic Success Network staff used the *HelioCampus* and *Excellence in Academic Advising* platforms (see Campus Response to Questions Raised by the Commission below) to identify courses that appear to have higher DFW rates for African-American students relative to other students and explore possible unintentional barriers that could be eliminated (e.g., cost of course materials, course policies, and access to support resources). As a result of this evaluation, FSU implemented *NetTutor* in the fall of 2019, an online tutoring platform available 24/7 and staffed by professionally trained tutors. *NetTutor* acts as an additional resource to the current one-to-one, appointment-based system currently offered by the Tutoring Center.

Additionally, FSU adapted its outreach and services for academic probation students over the reporting period, using protocols developed by the Stanford University College Transition Collaborative. In AY 2018-2019, a required meeting for students was redesigned to be more interactive as well as renamed the Academic Success Workshop (previously the Academic Recovery Workshop) to reframe the tone of the sessions. As a result of data collected from focus groups in spring 2018, check-in meetings were also added each semester to supplement the content covered during the initial workshop, and one-on-one appointments were scheduled with students to help guide their academic progress. Additionally, Frostburg established an academic probation student “course” on the university’s learning management system that features academic support modules. In the fall of 2018, 191 students accessed at least one module, while 214 students accessed at least one module in the spring of 2019.

The Associate’s Degree Scholarship has been developed to recognize and honor transfer students who have earned an Associate Degree with high academic standing. The scholarship is automatically awarded to any student who transfers from a Maryland Community College with a GPA of 3.0 and obtained an Associate’s Degree. Information is also provided to transfer students at Open Houses and at College visits by Financial Aid staff and admission counselors. In FY 2018, 220 students received scholarships in a total amount of \$506,250.

The CAAR office continues to partner with the College Bound Foundation and assist with the Last Dollar Grant/College Completion program by working with students in the College Completers cohorts to provide additional support and outreach. One hundred percent (7 of 7) students in the AY 2018-2019 cohort returned for the fall 2019 semester.

Frostburg also continues to partner with *ReUp Education* to re-enroll students who had failed to persist at the university. *ReUp* provided coaching to students who had neither graduated from FSU nor enrolled at another institution in order to help facilitate paths to graduation at Frostburg.

In the fall 2019, fifteen students were readmitted through engagement with *ReUp* Education. Frostburg also assigned ten new students in AY 2018-2019 who transferred to FSU without a declared major to the CAAR office, whose staff serve as these students' academic advisors and provide a welcoming connection to the campus.

Goal 3: Recruit and retain diverse and talented faculty and staff committed to student learning and University goals.

Cultural Diversity of Faculty and Staff

The University includes in its Cultural Diversity Program several strategies that focus on the effective recruitment, enrollment, and retention of faculty and staff from traditionally underrepresented groups (**MSP Strategies 9 and 11**). Over the reporting period, Frostburg experienced a slight increase in the percentage of African-American faculty (from 4.0% in 2018 to 4.6% in 2019). While the percentage of female faculty decreased from 43.8% for 2018 to 42.4% in 2019, the performance measure met the benchmarked goal (**MFR Objective 3.1**).

Over the reporting period, the Sibson Consulting Group worked with FSU to examine the University's administrative and support services as part of the Strategic Plan goal to assess and reallocate resources to support strategic initiatives. The study's findings were presented to over 100 faculty, staff, and students in May 2019.

The number of professionally accredited programs at FSU increased to 11 over the reporting period (**MFR Objective 3.2**) as a result of Frostburg's Physician Assistant program receiving accreditation-provisional status from the Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant (ARC-PA) in May 2019. Accreditation from ARC-PA is one of the more demanding processes in higher education.

Goal 4: Enhance facilities and the campus environment in order to support and reinforce student learning.

As outlined in its strategic plan, Frostburg is committed to strategic allocation of resources (fiscal, human, and physical), facilities planning, and campus enhancement and maintenance. The amount of funding spent on facilities increased over the reporting period, from 2.3% in 2018 to 2.6% in 2019 (**MFR Objective 4.1**). The university also expects to meet its goal in FY 2019 of maintaining a 2% rate of operating budget reallocation (**MFR Objective 4.1**), but cannot confirm these data until the USM Effectiveness and Efficiency reporting is completed in late October 2019.

The construction phase of the new residence hall began with structural framework in the summer of 2019, with occupancy planned for the fall of 2020, with 400-plus beds. Also during the reporting period, Frostburg completed several renovations to its current residence halls, including Annapolis and Cumberland Halls. The university expects the new facility and improvements to its current residence halls will help to attract students to the university and integrate effectively with on-campus housing requirements for incoming first-year students in an effort to better promote academic success.

In July 2019, President Nowaczyk testified at a state hearing on the new Education and Health Sciences Building, making a request in for the first full year of construction funding. The schedule is to complete design by late winter 2020 and begin construction in spring 2020, which is expected to be completed in approximately two years. (**MHEC Strategy 6**).

Goal 5: Promote economic development in Western Maryland and in the region.

Headcount Enrollment

While Frostburg's overall headcount enrollment decreased over the reporting period (from 5,396 in 2018 to 5,294 in 2019), the number of bachelor's degree graduates increased by 5.0% (from 1,026 in 2018 to 1,077 in 2019). Continuing enrollment trends at Frostburg can be partly attributed to a decline in the number of incoming students, primarily in transfer students. This trend has been supported via discussions with other institutions in the University System of Maryland, who have experienced similar circumstances. Economic factors may also play a role, with a smaller pool of community college students securing jobs without finishing their AA degrees or pursuing bachelor's degrees. Frostburg continues to analyze the trends of high school and community colleges to further address this issue.

Economic Development

Expanding outreach and engagement into the surrounding region has historically been a key goal for Frostburg. Under the continuing direction of the Vice President for Regional Development and Engagement (RDE), the number of economic development initiatives at FSU (**MFR Objective 5.3**) are expected to increase from seven (2019) as the Office of RDE works toward integrating university resources with regional partners to help communities and companies remain competitive and meet the challenges of economic and community development.

In May 2019, the College of Business' established its external consulting arm, the new Center for Regional Engagement and Economic Development (CREED), which is committed to partnering with organizations in Maryland, Pennsylvania and West Virginia so that they can access faculty expertise in information management, skills training, leadership training, management development training, and research and consulting services (**MSP Strategies 8, 10, and 11**).

Goal 6: Promote activities that demonstrate the University's educational distinction.

Educational Outreach

Frostburg continues to provide increased opportunities for students to engage in service learning, volunteerism, and community service. For the reporting period, instances of student involvement in community outreach increased from 3,801 in 2018 to 4,506 in 2019, meeting the benchmarked goal (**MFR Objective 6.2**).

Division II

In July 2019, the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) announced that FSU was officially accepted to begin the Division II membership process. Frostburg and its 21 varsity programs have joined the Mountain East Conference (MEC) for the 2019-2020 athletic year, and is now the second Division II member in the state of Maryland, joining Bowie State University.

National Recognition

Frostburg State University takes pride in its commitment to student success and affordability (**MSP Strategy 2**). Several national recognitions received over the reporting period are summarized below:

- OnlineMasters.com, an online service designed to encourage students to pursue higher education, ranked Frostburg State University's online MBA in October 2018 as one of the best online MBA programs nationally, as well as one of the best for health care management, in its recent rankings for 2019.
- Also in October 2018, Frostburg State University's online Master of Science in Applied Computer Science received additional recognition, being ranked 21st on Affordable Colleges Online's Best Online Master's in Computer Science for 2018 through 2019 and 11th on SR Education Groups Most Affordable Master's in Computer Science Online for 2019.
- In January 2019, VIQTORY, which serves military personnel and their spouses transitioning into civilian life, named Frostburg State University to its coveted 2019-2020 Military Friendly Schools list, marking the eighth time in a row FSU has received this distinction. The Military Friendly Schools list honors colleges, universities and trade schools in the country that go above and beyond to embrace America's military service members, veterans and spouses as students and ensure their success on campus.
- Frostburg State University's Master of Science in Counseling Psychology was recognized in February 2019 by the online service Human Services Edu as one of the best and most affordable counseling programs in the nation for 2019, and one of only two recognized in the state of Maryland.
- In May 2019, FSU was again designated a Voter Friendly Campus by national nonpartisan organizations Campus Vote Project and NASPA – Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education. Frostburg is one of 123 designated schools in the country. FSU first received this recognition in 2017, following the 2016 presidential election.

Other Activities

In April 2019, Frostburg submitted a Substantive Change Request Form to the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE) for its program at Hunan University of Commerce (HUC). The Commission accepted the request in May 2019 and has requested a site visit to occur no later than six months after the commencement of instruction at HUC.

The Strategic Directions in Distance Education Workgroup (DESD) was appointed by the Provost in summer 2019 as an action item based on the end of year recommendations of the Distance Education Advisory Group, a standing faculty senate advisory committee. The DESD is a multidisciplinary team of leadership, faculty, and staff charged with developing a strategic directions plan for the purpose of improving and expanding distance education at FSU.

According to the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) special undergraduate opportunities have been designated High-Impact Practices (HIPs) due to their positive associations with student learning and retention. The results of the 2019 NSSE survey showed that 64% of first-year FSU students and 95% of seniors identified that they have participated in one or more of the following HIPs while at Frostburg: service-learning, learning community, research with faculty, internship, study abroad, and culminating senior experience.

Campus Response to Questions Raised by the Commission

Commission Assessment: The Commission continues to focus its attention on equity gaps in college outcomes among minority college students and their white peers. A central topic of the 2019 Completion Summit MHEC held in April was on college completion and equity. One of the speakers, Dr. Nikki Edgecombe of the Community College Research Center (CCRC), discussed ways institutions can create more equitable and inclusive pathways for students to achieve their educational goals.

The principles she posited include: 1) knowing your students, 2) understanding the obstacles to their success, 3) adopting and adapting responsive policies and practices, and 4) scaling and institutionalizing continuous improvement. In reference to this, she stated “Targeted interventions are probably one of the more powerful vehicles we have for addressing gaps in attainment. They are not always popular, but universal interventions often times may lift all boats but maintain gaps...”

For your institution, please describe: 1) one or more targeted interventions and the population(s) served, 2) the identified obstacles the students might face, 3) the metrics used to evaluate the intervention(s) and 4) the evidence used to assess and adapt the intervention(s) to ensure its intended effects.

Frostburg State University has established several targeted interventions to address gaps in attainment and create more equitable and inclusive pathways for students to achieve their educational goals. Two prominent examples are the Achieve Initiative and the Excellence in Academic Advising (EAA) comprehensive strategic planning process.

The university's Achieve Initiative focuses on a target population of entering students who score a 0 on their mathematics entrance examination and are subsequently required to take a developmental mathematics course. Beginning in the fall of 2019, 49 first-year students elected to enroll in designated pilot sections of Elements of Applied Probability and Statistics, a course that meets FSU's General Education Program mathematics requirement. These students participated in seminars and other activities focusing on just-in-time remediation, reinforcement of course content, and reflection on mindset and metacognition to help them earn college credit for mathematics during their first semester.

Frostburg's Strategic Planning Action Items include "support(ing) student success through comprehensive academic and career services that focus on the needs of students from admission through their years as alumni." An important part of achieving this goal is the Excellence in Academic Advising (EAA) comprehensive strategic planning process.

In the spring of 2019, an Excellence in Academic Advising (EAA) taskforce of almost 100 faculty and staff members drafted an Advising Mission Statement and Goals and completed an analysis of institutional data and evidence. The taskforce also gathered for a day-and-a-half retreat in August 2019, led by an EAA Fellow to synthesize cross-conditional findings and begin drafting recommendation for an action plan to be implemented during the academic year. Co-sponsored by the National Academic Advising Association (NACADA) and the Gardner Institute, the EAA project will establish standards over the next five years for the institution to evaluate and improve academic advising and acknowledge the central role of advising in promoting student learning, success, and completion.